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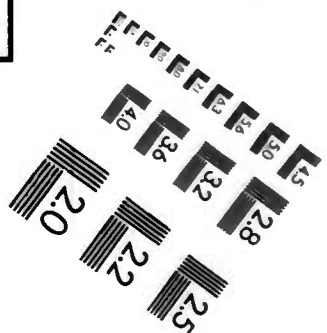
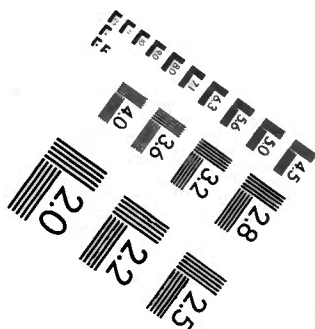
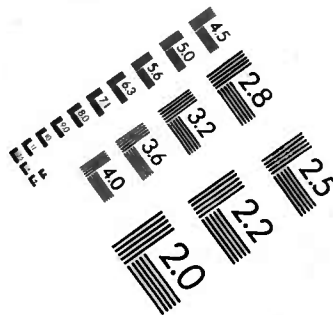
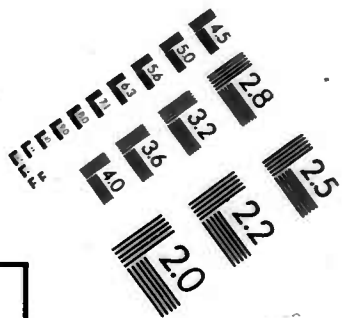
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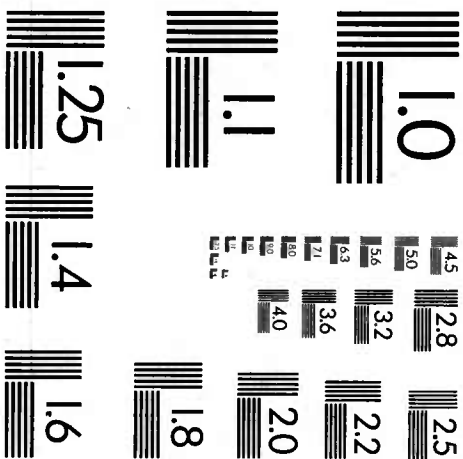
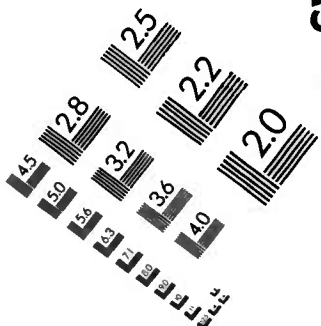


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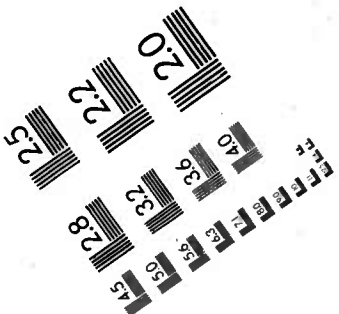
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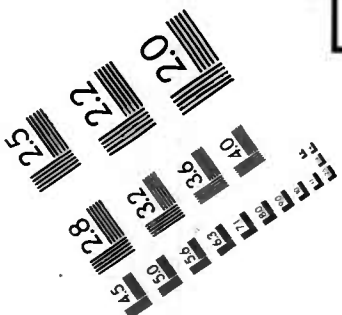
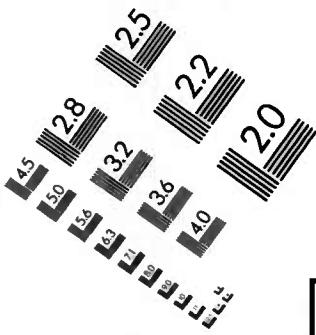
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The Present Position
of
Protestantism in Ireland

AND AN AFTERWORD

BY

Rev. JOHN GWYNN, S.J.

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IN IRELAND

AFTERWORD

USUALLY termed a Foreword, I ask the reader to regard this as an Afterword to the pages which contain, with the addition of a few footnotes, a lecture delivered by me in the Rotunda, Dublin, some few months back.

Various criticisms were passed on that Lecture in the form of articles in the Protestant official organ, the *Church of Ireland Gazette*, letters to the Dublin Press, mostly, if not exclusively, by Protestant clergymen, several sermons in Protestant Churches, and some harangues in a Dublin Orange Hall quite recently.

If one could conceive these criticisms written before my Lecture, I would have had a rich mine from which to quarry examples proving the utter incapacity of the Protestant clergy to treat any theological question, and, above all, their painfully poor attempts to discuss its philosophical aspect. Did not the limits of space imposed on me by the publishers of this pamphlet prevent it, I would be satisfied simply to give in full the various articles, sermons, letters, &c., as they appeared in the Protestant Press, and add one note to this effect:—"Here are samples of the reasoning, learning," and, indeed, I might add, "culture to which I referred in my Lecture as characteristic of the Irish Protestant clergy as a body." I must be satisfied to touch some salient points, but would prefer the reader, if he would get their full flavour, to peruse these criticisms themselves. No orderly setting forth of their self-contradictions, want of logic, missing the point of an argument, could have half the charm, the simple crude, naïve, productions have, as they come fresh from the literary anvil of their various writers. Through the thin nap of verbiage, the threadbare texture of the two years' Divinity course at Trinity College keeps painfully obtruding itself. There is a certain humour in seeing others hopelessly bogged and floundering about in a logical morass, which appeals to the Irish mind, and, apart from the

tragical results, forcibly provokes mirth. Here is a delightful piece of reasoning I culled from an article in the *Church of Ireland Gazette*. The writer quotes me, and, indeed, accurately, for which, mindful of how my other critics cited me, I must express my gratitude. He quotes me as saying:—"Protestantism leads to Agnosticism," and then proceeds—"Was it Protestantism that led to the present Cabinet of Portugal, wherein every member is an Agnostic. Was it Protestantism led to the general infidelity of France?" I am sure many a Protestant reader of the article drew the conclusion evidently drawn by its writer. "Therefore, Protestantism does not lead to Agnosticism." Fancy pointing to a man who has been run over by an express train, and to another who has been killed by a lydite shell, and asking was it strychnine killed the first? was it strychnine killed the second? and then triumphantly proclaiming—"What an audacity to declare that strychnine produces death!" Those two years' Divinity course at Trinity are responsible for much. Through the marvellous medley of misstatements, the inability to grasp a point, the refutation of positions that were never occupied, the undermining of arguments which were never advanced, the taking up of positions that were shown a half a century ago, even in Protestant centres of learning abroad, to be untenable, through it all and explaining it all looms the two years' Divinity course at Trinity. They explain why Dr. Crozier asserted a Decree of the Council of Trent was founded on the Douai version of the Bible, and that the intervention of a priest was necessary for the conferring of a Sacrament.

Can we Catholics be blamed for appreciating the comedy and humour of the situation when, in the midst of all this a Divinity Lecturer of Trinity, with the most perfect child-like simplicity, declared before the General Synod that he "had spent one term lecturing upon the Roman controversy," and his "only regret was that the Pope was not present to hear those Lectures." It was subject for regret certainly. It

might have been explained to the Pope how the Decree of the Council of Trent was founded on the Douai version of the Bible and other brilliant theses. Oh! for one grain of the saving sense of humour! A good deal of space and time was devoted by my critics to regretting that I had not lectured on "the financial state of the Protestant Church," or "the *Ne Temere* ' Decree," or various other subjects which were suggested. Any, evidently, would have been more pleasing than the one I did select—"The Present Position of Protestantism in Ireland."

It would be uninteresting to refer to the numerous mis-statements of facts made by some when referring to my Lecture. The crude, colossal nature of one, made in a sermon delivered in a Protestant church in Dublin, gives it a certain interest. I am not responsible for the grammar of the citation. The preacher said:—"Father Gwynn gives a list of distinguished converts gathered out during sixty years. With a curious arithmetical lapse he begins his sixty years at 1815. He boasts of over three thousand converts." I cannot conceive what state of mind or imagination possessed the reverend preacher, when he made that statement. I do not think that even the two years' Divinity course at Trinity can account for it. I gave no list of distinguished converts "gathered out" during a period of sixty years. I never referred to any period of sixty years. I never said a word about three thousand converts.

A writer in the *Church of Ireland Gazette* takes me to task for being a diligent student of Protestant literature. I do confess to reading the proceedings of the General Synod and other such Protestant literature when I wish to recreate my mind with humouresque logic, and I must say I am rarely disappointed. The desire of the Trinity Divinity Lecturer to have the Pope hear his theological efforts, the logic of the writer referred to above proving that Protestantism does not lead to Agnosticism, *because* the Cabinet of Portugal is Agnostic and yet was not Protestant, and so on. All

that I find intensely amusing. The writer says:—"Father Gwynn is evidently a diligent student of our literature. He reads our papers, peruses carefully the reports of our meetings, analyses the lists of the lectures given in our Divinity School." My only defence is that when I do lecture on a subject, even though it be Protestantism, I do not regard it as a qualification for my position to be supremely ignorant of the subject on which I undertake to enlighten my audience. This may seem strange to Protestant writers, who act so differently in their dealing with writing, or lecturing on Catholicity. When Dr. Crozier undertook to enlighten his Belfast audience on the Douai version of the Bible and the Catholic doctrine of the Sacraments, he evidently did not deem a knowledge of these subjects on his part at all necessary.

Having been told, then, that I knew too much about Protestantism, it was rather surprising to learn from my next clerical critic that I knew nothing at all about it. I can only recommend the first critic to consult the second and the second to consult the first, and to try and amicably come to some compromise on the matter.

One worthy clergyman thought his views important enough to commit to a Dublin newspaper and also to the official organ of Protestantism in Ireland. The major part of the criticism is taken up dealing with my audience, its composition and its conduct. It was composed mainly of priests and young men. It laughed too much at one time and too little at others. The judge of the humour and of the extent to which it was to be appreciated was, of course, the Reverend Canon himself. Then the chairman was late. My personal appearance and the quality and tone of my voice came under his keen powers of observation. All of which is sharp, logical, trenchant criticism! But that the reverend writer signed his name, and that the title Canon is not yet given in the Irish Protestant Church to women, I would certainly have gathered that the author was an old lady, and very probably an old

maid. He breaks the beautiful simplicity of his critique by an effort to be really logical. It made himself smile, he naïvely remarks. I do not wonder. When I spoke of the Protestant Church in Ireland sitting authority-less in the land, the keen-minded Canon says, "smiling, I was thinking of the Pope himself and how he cannot venture to have an ecclesiastical procession in Rome." So, according to the Canon, the Protestants of Ireland bear the same relation to, and have as much respect for their Church dignitaries as the Atheists and Anarchists of cosmopolitan Rome do and have for the Pope. Well, if an Irish Protestant clergyman says so it is not for me to gainsay it. The confusion of an ecclesiastical procession with an ecclesiastical precept suggests that two years' Divinity course at Trinity.

It is as difficult to follow the gyrations, somersaults, unmeaning motions of a bluebottle against a window-pane on a sunny day as to refer to the various views of my critics on the question of Church authority. I said a smile would ripple across the land if the Protestant Primate or Synod exercised any authority, giving, as an example, the imposing of a strict fast. It is most interesting and amusing to see how the various writers and speakers fume and fuss around that simple statement. All agree it is true. The *Church of Ireland Gazette*, in a leading article, by way of reply, says "it would cause a greater ripple of laughter" if the Protestant bishops "sent out a pastoral to Irish Churchmen promising them 500 days' indulgence. I have no doubt it would. We are quite at one on that point. Roughly speaking, the greater the exercise of authority attempted, the louder the ripple of laughter.

In another article in the same journal, fasting and abstinence is classed amongst "the taboo superstitions of savage tribes." Here is a blue-bottle gyration in good sooth. Has Irish Protestantism come to this, that what the Bible proclaims good and holy, it regards as fetish worship? Why is there a list of fast days and days of abstinence given in the Revised Protestant

Prayer Book? Do Protestants bring to Church on Sunday two books, their Prayer Book and the Bible, both of which enjoin what we are now told Protestants regard as "the taboo superstitions of savage tribes?" Later on we are confronted with another bluebottle *volte-face*. The same organ tells us that the Irish Protestant Church shrinks from enforcing a fast because she is not "a maker of sins."

Evidently little time and less thought is given in the two years' Divinity course at Trinity to the Philosophy of law. It is usual to regard the violator of the law, and not the maker of the law, as "the maker of sin." God Himself, the State, parents, make laws. Will the Protestant journal hold, "therefore they make sin"? Of course they will see now that the real question to be discussed was, "Did Christ give real authority to His Church"? To speak of indulgences, taboo superstitions, maker of sins, only suggests the two years' Divinity course at Trinity.

The writer of the article goes on to suggest that the Church of Ireland need only propose, advise the observance of fast days to her children. Well, we are glad to learn that Irish Protestants have such a natural tendency to fasting and mortification that they need only a little advice, or, perhaps, require a little restraint, not to overdo it. Our experience would hardly help us to discover *this fact*. At any rate, we gather now that there is no such body as "Irish Protestant Church Authorities." The body usually regarded as such is an advising committee, dispensing friendly hints to any one who may chose to listen.

I have left myself very little space to refer to the prudent reserve displayed by all my critics with regard to the defective training of the Irish Protestant clergy. I said nothing of culture. When they did refer to it at a very safe distance, and in a very safe, vague fashion, or, at least, when they thought they were doing so, or, perhaps, better, when they would have others think they were doing so, they spoke of "the superior culture of the Irish Protestant clergy." One of my

critics, a clergyman I am sorry to say, the only one to whom I refer by name—the Rev. A. Lockett Ford, The Rectory, Ardee—to give a specimen of this superior culture, refers to my lecture as “a devout exhortation.”

I spoke of the superior mental training given to the candidates for Catholic Priesthood in Maynooth, enabling them to face a philosophical or theological problem. I made no reference whatsoever to culture. One might as well controvert my position by speaking of the superior golf-playing, or, superior cricket powers of the Irish Protestant clergy. Dr. Crozier, for aught I know, may be a man of culture, just as he may be a good golf-player, but every phase of his speeches at the political meetings in Belfast stamp him as incapable of handling a theological question.

I must say that not one of my critics denied that the young priest leaving Maynooth after his, at least, six years' training, whose days and hours were passed in the lecture hall and private study, was an incomparably better equipped theologian and thinker than the young Protestant clergyman with his paltry two years, a few lectures a week, and hours of study to be determined by himself. I can understand one denying this provided he admitted a first-class miracle in favour of each Protestant clergyman.

It was not lightly I suggested that Protestant Divinity students could avail themselves of the culture and ascetical training to be had at the Empire, Tivoli, Gaiety Theatre, and at tennis and garden parties, all of which are closed avenues of improvement to the Maynooth student. In a paper read this year before the Dublin Clerical Association (Protestant), the reader, a Protestant clergyman, said:—“At present many of our Divinity students live in surroundings that neither promote manliness nor godliness.”

The *Church of Ireland Gazette* did not express its gratitude to me as it did to the Protestant Bishop of Cashel, who, in a pamphlet published since my lecture, said all I said about the Divinity course at Trinity, but much more bluntly. The qualification of candidates

for ordination in the Irish Protestant Church, says the Protestant Bishop of Cashel, "are for the most part inferior. . . . *Many are lamentably ignorant of the Holy Scriptures* (the italics are mine). . . . In theology we are, I fear, behind other Churches, the time for theological study is too short." He says "I fear." He may be absolutely sure of it. In the same pamphlet the authority of a Trinity Divinity Lecturer is quoted to the effect that the Maynooth training is superior as "the instruction of the Protestant Divinity student is often inadequate and quite too indefinite." When I said this, the *Church of Ireland Gazette* "rubbed its eyes with astonishment." When the Protestant Bishop said it, the same organ could not find words to express its gratitude. In the light of all this we can understand the woeful things said at times by Irish Protestant clergymen. Take, for example, the statement made by a Protestant clergyman in a letter to the *Dublin Leader* a few weeks ago that "neither the Church nor the State has the right to decide what constitutes a true and binding marriage." In the same paper another Protestant clergyman quotes *Nuttal's Dictionary* for the meaning of "Anathema." In the Trinity Divinity School that Dictionary, for all I know, may be the text-book, the last court of appeal for the meaning of ecclesiastical terms. It would seem to be so. A young lady, a very young lady she must have been, once asked Mathew Arnold what pronouncing dictionary he used.

The improvement of the Trinity Divinity School, the raising of the standard of learning and thought and life there, would, with the quick parts Providence has given to our Irish youth, inaugurate a movement in the religious life of Ireland along the lines of the Oxford movement; but which the keen, logical sense of the Irish mind would not allow to stop where the Oxford movement did, along the frontier of the Catholic Church.

JOHN GWYNN, S.J.

MILLTOWN PARK,
May 31st, 1911.

The Present Position of Protestantism in Ireland

I do not understand a lecturer beginning his discourse by apologising for it. If an apology be due, then the remedy is at hand; let him not discourse. In a post-script I can understand an apology. I do not quite grasp the logic of it in a preface.

We have had a goodly number of speeches lately both here in Dublin and in Belfast. It was quite the fashion for the speakers to begin by apologising, saying their quarrel was with principles and systems, not with individuals.

Now a man's principles are to him something like his mother, especially his religious principles and his religious system. We Catholics speak of our Holy Mother the Church. I presume we mean it. To come to a man and say to him that he is a fine fellow himself, but that his mother and all belonging to him are a bad lot, and perhaps qualifying "bad" with an expletive which would not grace my lecture, shows a rather obtuse mind and coarse-grained heart.

The law quarrels with principles, not with individuals. But the only way the law has to hang objectionable principles is to hang the individuals who hold them—a supreme consolation, I feel sure, for those who are going to be hanged.

Choice of a Title

The title of my lecture I had chosen long before I was aware the present Protestant Archbishop of Dublin had chosen it for his discourse at the last

Protestant Dublin Synod. Later still in my reading I learned a similar title was given to a pamphlet by the Protestant Bishop of Clôyne just a century and a quarter ago. Its full title ran—"The present State of the Church of Ireland, containing a Description of its Precarious Situation and the Consequent Danger to the Public."

I read them both carefully, thinking to glean a little from the views of others on a subject to which I had given some study. I was disappointed, as both Prelates contented themselves with the brief expression of a pious trust in Providence and then devoted the rest of their discourse and paper to the question of tithes, glebe lands, auxiliary funds and other financial questions. Cromwell addressed his Ironsides on one occasion here in Ireland—"Put your trust in God, boys, but above all things keep your powder dry."

Now, I am not a financier, so it is not with the financial aspect of Protestantism I shall occupy your and my time this evening.

Definition of Protestantism

I confess at the very outset I am embarrassed when I would define what I mean by Protestantism. Yet I can hardly be blamed when, in this year of grace, 1911, or, more accurately, in the final months of 1910, a discussion was being carried on in the *Spectator* as to what the Church of England is, or, in other words, what English Protestantism is. Irish Protestantism rejoices that she is a kind of Siamese twin sister of English Protestantism. When one of a pair of Siamese twins is undiscoverable, the problem of finding the other presents evident difficulties. I shall not trust myself to give a hard and fast definition.

Were I to do so I do not suppose a half-dozen in Ireland would admit themselves comprehended.

By Protestantism I mean that tone of religious thought and sentiment, that "*mentalité*" characteristic of Elizabethan Churchmen and their followers, and which is to be found in that religious body whose

legal title is the Protestant Episcopalian Church of Ireland.

I know that Methodists, Congregationalists, and others will claim the title Protestant. However, once I have stated what I mean by Protestantism and Protestants, if I do not satisfy everybody, at least everybody will understand me.

I have already received letters giving me many and excellent reasons for not giving this lecture. I could add a good number more myself to those so kindly suggested to me. If anyone feels tempted to add to the list I would beg of them to spare themselves the needless trouble of giving them, and me the monotonous trouble of reading them.

Irish View of Protestantism

My reason for giving this lecture is the interest Protestantism just at this time has for us Catholics. The present position in itself, and as far as in its present phase it mirrors the future of a body of our countrymen, which as Protestant, we regard as having trickled into our national, social, and religious life some three hundred years ago must have an interest for us. Some I know on historical grounds would object to the phrase "trickled into our life." Cobbett spoke of the Church of England as "by law and bayonets established." I am afraid he would have to refer to the corresponding Church here as "by law and horse, foot and artillery established."

It has flown through our life ever since, as the Gulf stream through the ocean, in it but not of it. Except at the edges, where, of necessity, it was bound to fuse with the surrounding people, as a body it has kept its individuality, politically, socially, and as a form of religion,

Protestantism from a social point of view we have always made too much of. Politically it has always made too much of itself. Religiously, or as a system of religion, we have never succeeded in taking it

seriously here in Ireland, except when we had to pay tithes.

Explain it how you will, there is always a gleam of humour in the eye, a whimsical stirring at least in the grey matter of the brain, an instinctive up-curving of the corners of the lips of every Irish Catholic when Protestantism as a religion comes before him. Quite typical of that frame of mind is the picture, vivid in my mind to-day, of the young Irish lad in a Southern town some few years ago who, to me asking if the building in front of us were a church, replied with humour streaming from his eye and in the delightful music of a sweet Cork accent, "It is, Father, but it is only a Protestant one."

To see ourselves as others see us is proverbially very difficult, but to see others as they see themselves is more difficult, and the difficulty is increased when those others have such a blurred knowledge of themselves that they cannot tell who they are or what they are.

I told you how in England they are unable to say what a Protestant really is. I do not think in Ireland they ever have had the courage to take up that difficult question.

A Strange "Lineal Descendant"

But there is one view of the Protestant Church here in which they seemed to be agreed that it is—to use their unscientific, inaccurate phrase—"the lineal descendant of the Ancient Church founded by St. Patrick." The old doggerel rhyme which stated "St. Patrick was a gentleman," they have added to, by inserting that not only was he a gentleman, but a Protestant into the bargain.

When they say the present Protestant Church is "the lineal descendant of the ancient Irish Church," what they mean is, that it is the same. There is no sense in talking of the English nation of to-day being the lineal descendant of the English nation of two hundred

years ago or five hundred years ago. It is not. It is the same nation.

Their theory then, stated accurately and scientifically, is that the Protestant Church of to-day is the same as the Church of St. Patrick was up to the year 600 A.D.

A Missing Chapter in Protestant Theology

In the first place they point to the "historical fact," which is not a fact, and, therefore, not historical, that in Elizabeth's reign the bishops, clergy, and people embraced Protestantism. What became of these Protestants who acknowledged the errors of Catholicism their historians do not say. At the end of Elizabeth's reign "the very air of Ireland was tainted with Popery," as Chichester complained. Did Elizabeth and her gentle servants slay all those who had become Protestants lest they become tainted by the superstition of Popery? Or were they translated bodily to happier regions as a reward for their perversion? What became of them? That Ireland was universally Protestant ten years or so after the accession of Elizabeth is what is taught seriously in Protestant histories*; that it was universally Catholic at the end of her reign is an admitted fact. But supposing that the Irish Bishops did apostatise, which they did not, one feels ashamed to have to remind Protestant learned divines of the merest alphabet of Theology that validity of orders is not the same as apostolical succession,† and, therefore, does not ensure the continuance of a Church. Of course, considering the theological training, or rather the want of it, in the Irish Protestant Church, this will be for many of them a new dogmatic truth.

Suppose all the Protestant bishops and clergy in Ireland became Mormons to-morrow, and suppose they

* *Vide* Palmer's "Ecclesiastical History."

† Last year a Protestant clergyman, who had been officiating as such for several years, told me he had never heard of the distinction between having valid orders and having ecclesiastical jurisdiction.

had valid orders and so, other bishops could be and were consecrated, would that strange Mormonic society be the same, or, to use their unscientific language, be the lineal descendant of the Protestant Episcopal Church of to-day.

A company commissioned by the State to mint money, if it no longer did so, would, I presume, cease to exist as that company even though the same members formed a club to play pitch and toss with the money they had coined. So a troop of jugglers could hardly be termed the lineal descendant of a former billiard ball manufacturing company, though they were the same individuals who as a company once made the billiard balls which they now swallow, cause to disappear, change into live rabbits, and put through other metamorphoses peculiar to their new profession.

A second position is taken up by Irish Protestantism, more logical than the last, but with a basis still less supported, if possible, by history. It is that the tenets, doctrines, and faith of the ancient Irish Church were Protestant.

Drs. Peacocke and Traill as Historians versus

Dr. Bury

A very interesting meeting of the Trinity College Theological Society was held some ten years ago at which Dr. Traill, the present Provost, spoke. He said the Catholic view of St. Patrick's work was perfectly untenable, that history had finally shown the ancient Irish Church as entirely independent of Rome. His remarks were received with applause by the learned body of Protestants present.

Suddenly a bombshell dropped into the midst of the Protestant historical view. The bombshell took the shape of a "Life of St. Patrick," published by Professor J. B. Bury, once a Fellow of Trinity College, then and since a Professor of History in the University of Cambridge, and an acknowledged expert in historical studies.

In the first place, Dr. Bury candidly describes Dr. Todd, from whom a whole generation of Protestants took their views, as an historian who left him (Dr. Bury) "doubtful about every fact connected with Patrick's life." "Dr. Todd wrote," he continues to say, "with an unmistakable ecclesiastical bias . . . anxious to establish a particular thesis . . . and with an interest totally irrelevant to historical truth."* Professor Bury then gives his own conclusions. They tend to show, he says, "that the Roman Catholic conception of St. Patrick's work is generally nearer to historical fact than the views of some anti-Papal divines."† In the body of his work the same historian says—In Patrick's time "Ireland was in principle as closely linked to Rome as any Western Church . . . it was to the Bishop of Rome, as representing the unity of the Church, that the Christians of Ireland, desiring to be an organised portion of that unity, would naturally look to speed them on their way. . . . Ireland had become one of the Western Churches, and, therefore, like its fellows, looked to the See of Rome as the highest authority in Christendom."‡ Dr. Traill, in 1900, looked on the question as finally settled.

Dr. Peacocke, the Protestant Archbishop of Dublin, a few weeks ago at the Protestant Conference in Belfast, naively declared—"We Irish Churchmen are quite clear in our minds that our Church's claim to be descended from the ancient Church of Ireland (whatever that means) . . . is fully justified on historical grounds." I recommend to both him and Dr. Traill the perusal of the latest "Life of St. Patrick," by their co-religionist, Dr. Bury.

What stamps a Church with its individuality is its beliefs and doctrines naturally revealing themselves in its rites and ceremonies, religious practices and various forms of religious life.

* Bury. "Life of St. Patrick." Preface vii.

† Bury. *Ibid.*

‡ Bury. "Life of St. Patrick." Chap. III., § 5.

A Proof !

One effort made by Protestants to trace a similarity between their Church and St. Patrick's I refer to, as it will help to lighten this perhaps rather dry and technical part of my lecture.

The clergy in St. Patrick's time married, and the clergy of the Irish Protestant Church do likewise. So speak the apologists of Irish Protestantism. The latter portion of the statement they presume is granted, and I do not think we can deny it. That the clergy of St. Patrick's time married is always proved in the same fashion. I quote the proof from a Protestant Church Catechism, the author of which regards it as the "leading proof"! It states—"I, Patrick, am the son of Calpurnius, a deacon, the son of the late Potitus, a Presbyter or Priest." Then it asks—"What is plain from this?" and the answer taught to the children is—"That the clergy were allowed to marry"* This is the identical proof given by Dr. Traill, too, and, if I mistake not, by the late Provost Dr. Salmon. To-day a man who has been married and had children may on conditions accurately laid down by the Catholic Church become a priest. Thus many Catholic priests in England and in Belgium, and in other countries, could say as St. Patrick, I am the son of a deacon or a priest. Some could say, I am the grandson of a priest. Let us hope Dr. Traill and others will not learn this, else they will use it as an argument that the Catholic priesthood of these countries is not celibate.

I could learn, if it were necessary, from the "History of the Ancient Irish Church," published for the use of Protestant school children, that in St. Patrick's time and later, famous monasteries were founded all over the island. The ones at Durrow, Kells, and Swords were especially conspicuous. Monks and virgins inhabited them and practised the Evangelical counsels of Poverty, Chastity, and Obedience. According to

* Sherrard's "Catechetical Instruction."

Bury's reading of history, "young natives have become monks and daughters of chieftains virgins of Christ."*

Oh! how changed

Where are their counterparts in its "lineal descendant of to-day," the Irish Protestant Church? We never hear of the Protestant Bishops or clergy recommending the maidens of Belfast, or the 'Prentice Boys of Derry to convert some of their Orange Lodges into monasteries and live there in the practice of Poverty, Chastity and Obedience.

I am afraid the time is not yet ripe, as but a few months ago the worthy members of St. John's, Sandymount, prayed the Dublin Protestant Synod "to take such measures as will give them relief from the action of the Rev. Mr. Lefanu for establishing a community of nuns in the parish."

In one of St. Patrick's synods we read of offering prayers and sacrifices for the dead; in other historical documents the same Catholic practice is referred to, yet again the faithful members of the Protestant communion of Sandymount expressed their horror of the act of the Rev. Mr. Lefanu in asking for prayers for the soul of one of the dead members of his flock.

Professor Bury tells us—"Patrick bore back with him to Ireland . . . the most precious of all gifts, relics of the Apostles Peter and Paul."† Bells and croziers of that period are still preserved.

Now, when I meet Dr. Crozier, the present Primate of the Protestant Church, on the Kingstown Pier, returning from Rome, bearing with him relics of saints, as St. Patrick did long ago, to be distributed up in the North and amongst the Protestants of Ireland, telling me he has been "approved in the Catholic Faith," as a contemporary record states St. Patrick was, "by the Holy See,"‡ prepared to preach the practice of the

* Bury. "Life of St. Patrick." Chap. VIII., § 5.

† Bury. "Life of St. Patrick." Chap. VIII., § 1.

‡ Bury. *Ibid.*

Evangelical Counsels, ordering the image of the Mother of God with our Infant Saviour in her arms, a halo of glory round her head, to be inserted in the Protestant Prayer Book, as it is in the Book of Kells—when this happens I shall listen to the statement that the present Protestant Church is “the lineal descendant of the Church of St. Patrick” without my sense of the ludicrous being so strongly appealed to as it is at present.

Protestantism of Irish Protestantism

The aspect of the Protestant Church in Ireland which at once strikes a student of history and an observer of the various developments of religious thought is its intensely Protestant character. I do not think there is a Protestant religious body in the world so deeply Protestant as is the Irish Protestant Church of to-day. I am not speaking at all of the truth or falsehood of its position, but of the simple fact of its profoundly Protestant tone and temperament. It has kept, as far as twentieth century human beings could keep, to the Elizabethan traditions with more fidelity than any other religious body that came into being at that period.

That gives to this body the same fascination that would belong to a tribe in our midst who still trusted to bows and arrows, drank mead out of their enemies' skulls, and preferred the picturesqueness of paint to the comfort of clothes. The first thing it did when it was legislated out of existence as an Established Church was to protest against the Athanasian Creed,* and its last recorded act, a few weeks ago, was to protest against the Vicar of Christ using the power conferred on him. In the interval its life has been nothing but a bald protest.

* The Revised Protestant Prayer Book of the Irish Protestant Church was published in 1878. Amongst the changes was the following:—“The Rubric directing the public recital of the Athanasian Creed on certain stated days was removed.”

Protestantism in America, Germany and England

There is in America no Protestant Church as there is in Ireland—that is, there is no such homogeneous Protestant body. The freedom of the American eagle has invaded the diocese and the parish and the pulpit, so that a Protestant minister has no ecclesiastical restraint. As an American friend of mine put it to me—graphically, forcibly, if not very elegantly—“The American parson teaches and ceremonies as he darn likes.”

In the *New York Sun*, of some ten years ago, is given an account of a Protestant church in New York in which is reserved the Blessed Sacrament. The sanctuary lamp burns before it. In this same church public notices announce that confessions will be heard at certain definite hours.

Rather qualified Protestantism is this, and likely not to be met with in Ireland, at least for some time.

The German Protestant Church has ceased to be Protestant, and became everything but Protestant, some two hundred years ago.

The centre of gravity of the Established Church of England is distinctly Catholic in its tone, and not Protestant. Taking the four main divisions in the Established Church of England—the Ritualistic party, the High Church, the Low Church, and the Broad Church—and allowing the intellectual standing of the different parties to counterbalance their numerical strength, the centre of gravity would be fairly well up in the High Church.

A young Protestant parson, arriving for the first time, some short while ago, in his parish, announced to his astonished Church-wardens. “You are going to have everything Roman here, except the Pope.” And so they had. They had the Mass, the Canon of which was said in an inaudible voice; the Sacrament was reserved; Benediction was given; candles were lighted before the statue of Our Lady; festivals, such, as that

of Corpus Christi, were celebrated with becoming splendour.

This state of things is by no means uncommon or restricted to one part of England. A young Protestant clergyman wrote to me some time ago expressing a hope that his Church and the Catholic Church would soon be united, and that he saw no reason why the Pope of Rome should not be recognised as Supreme Head.

If such things were done or said in Ireland the Ulster army would have long ago crossed the Boyne and be in full march on whatever centre where such practices were allowed.

Irish Protestantism Stagnant

The stagnant Protestantism of Ireland stands out in strong contrast with the stir and movement of English Protestantism. The contrast is vividly revealed in that strong, deep, and steady stream into the Catholic Church which is becoming very noticeable of late years, especially of the more cultured and intellectual classes. Some few months ago in Brighton alone at least two Protestant clergymen and about two hundred of the laity were received into the Church.

"Why do not these things happen in Ireland?" was the question I put at the time to an English Protestant friend of mine, a clergyman.

"Well," he answered, "you must remember the Church in Ireland is a mere Protestant Church; it is too awful for words." Of course, this was no answer. My question was—Why is the Church in Ireland a mere Protestant Church? Why is it too awful for words?

The life of a society shows itself in the exercise of its authority. The vigour of its life is manifested by the vigilant, determined use of that authority.

A society that merely protests belongs so far to the lowest scale of social beings, if indeed it can be said to be a social being at all. To exercise authority is the heart beat of a social organism; to protest is the mere

deadweight of its members. To protest is the simple expression of a personal opinion, and any one can express an opinion who has an opinion to express. A man who is going to be hanged can protest, and very often does.

A Church which never Commands

I do not believe that the Protestant Church in Ireland ever exercised authority by laying a solemn injunction on its lay members; and what is more, I do not believe it could do it.

If any one denies that let it be put to the test. I am willing to re-consider that aspect of Protestantism if Dr. Crozier or the General Synod will impose a strict fast on all Protestants in Ireland on any one day in the year, binding under pain of grievous sin; or if they will impose an obligation of attending Divine Service on any one day, so that if Irish Protestants do not obey they will regard their consciences seriously burdened.

If Dr. Crozier or the Synod did so, or, rather, endeavoured to do so, a broad smile would ripple across the land from Cape Clear to Mizen Head.

Yet in the Book of Common Prayer as adopted by the Protestant Church at the Disestablishment is a list of days of fasting and abstinence. Protestants are bound to fast the forty days of Lent, Ember Days, Rogation Days, and all Fridays in the year except Christmas Day. But by whom? Certainly not by the Irish Protestant Church.

Yet I cannot help thinking if an Irish Protestant, and, above all, if an Irish Protestant minister were known to abstain from meat on Friday he would be denounced to the General Synod as undermining the faith of his flock and as infected with Romanism.

The Catholic Church lives and exercises authority. For example, she lays a solemn obligation on every Catholic to abstain from meat on Friday. She might to-morrow, for some special reason, proclaim a special fast day, and there would be quite possibly a special

meeting at the Metropolitan Hall, with the Protestant Archbishop of Dublin in the chair, to protest against her action as ruinous to butchers. Or she might dispense her children from an ordinary fast day for some reason, and then possibly there would be a meeting in Belfast, with Dr. Crozier in the chair, to protest against her action as ruinous to fishmongers, and perhaps the Right Hon. J. Campbell, K.C., would seize the opportunity of dilating on the "truculence" of Catholic ecclesiastical authorities in "over-riding the law of the land" by forbidding loyal subjects to do what by the law of the land they have a right to do.

It is this protesting character of the Protestant Church that gives it such a whimsical aspect in presence of the Catholic Church when authoritatively acting. This aspect is not, I think, altogether the sour-grapes aspect, nor is it the fox-who-had-lost-his-tail attitude, but rather that of the good man Friday when he first saw his master Robinson Crusoe, fire off his gun.

It is a state of complete amazement, of abject bewilderment, something like the mental state of a blue-bottle when on a warm, sunny day it makes for the green fields outside, but finds itself against the hard, invisible window-pane, where it buzzes and fumes helplessly.

One of the speakers of the protesting meeting some few weeks ago here in Dublin expressed the hope that this last act of authority would be the beginning of the downfall of the Church of Rome in Ireland. Fancy a doctor declaring a patient is going to die and giving as a reason that his heart was still beating. As Chesterton said of the reasons given by George Moore for leaving the Catholic Church, they are about the best for remaining in it.

There, then, is the material position of Protestantism in Ireland. What Irish Protestantism is saying and thinking to-day, or rather will say and think in about twenty years' time, Protestantism in the rest of the world said about a hundred years ago.

Ireland—The Home of Extremes

Why, then, is it that Protestantism has retained here this definite character? Such a phenomenon does call for some explanation. Nor do I think that we can account for this phenomenon by the simple fact, which we must accept, that Ireland is the home of extremes.

It is that fact which makes the history of Ireland so peculiarly interesting.

Extremes are always interesting. It is that quality of being extreme that makes women interesting. They are either wearing a hat which no one can see, or wearing a hat which keeps one from seeing anything else. At one time they wore crinolines which made it impossible for other people to walk; now they are wearing hobble skirts which make it impossible for themselves to walk. Every woman at heart is a Suffragette or a good mother and a sensible housewife.

It is not very exciting to watch a man walk along a broad road, but once he takes to walking on a tightrope he steps out of the monotonous and becomes interesting.

Wearing a sword will not gather a crowd in a street, but swallowing one will.

If Ulstermen threatened only to dig ditches no one would mind them; but it is when they begin to talk of lining ditches, which is an extreme use to put ditches to, that they become interesting. One big drum with other instruments goes to make an ordinary band; but fifteen big drums and no other instrument make an extraordinary one, and, therefore, capable of attracting attention—a fact to discover which was reserved to the highly developed musical sense of the Orangemen of the North.

Now, the history of Ireland is interesting because we are always walking on tightropes, swallowing swords, lining ditches, and have an undue number of big drums in our music.

We are either dying for the Crown out in South Africa or kicking it into the Boyne in Ireland. One

portion of the community is said to be priest-ridden; another portion occupies its spare time in consigning the Pope to a place where the standard of comfort is low. Some of us send our children to England to acquire an English accent, whilst others keep them at home and forbid them to speak English at all.

Yet, as I say, merely to assert that Ireland is the home of extremes does not explain why this extreme of Protestantism is with us. It is due to many causes.

The Catholicism of English Protestantism

Comparing Irish Protestantism with Protestantism as we find it in England, we must remember there was always from the beginning a deep, intense, if subconscious, stream of Catholic thought and sentiment in the latter which never was in the former.

The only essential Catholic doctrine denied by Henry VIII. was the supremacy of the Pope.

The English Church in the beginning was an Oriental Church in the West. For a time the Holy Sacrifice was offered with full Catholic ritual; devotion to the Mother of God was cultivated; and a Catholic tone and spirit lingered on. Though it lingered, or rather precisely because it only lingered, it was never obtrusive.

English Protestantism was like a summer's night in the Northern regions, where the twilight of the preceding day never dies altogether, but mingles with the darkness and creeps into ravines and valleys and waits for the dawn.

The whole nation became Protestant, and thus it never became ultra-Protestant.

It was never a fighting unit in a hostile country. There was no need to set sentinels, and have watch-words, and scrutinise passports. Rites and ceremonies were rarely, if ever, challenged unless they were openly and pronouncedly Catholic.

The burden of proof lay on the challenger to prove it was Catholic, rather than on the rite and ceremony to show it was Protestant.

All this, of course, was true of the general tone. There were exceptions, but with all the restrictions of exceptions.

Protestantism in England, as a rule, had that tone and sentiment towards Catholicism which possesses an English regiment keeping order in a good-humoured English crowd. It was never fighting for its life. In Ireland the sentiment of Protestantism was that of an English regiment in the Fenian days cooped up in a Tipperary barracks.

So the tradition of Catholicism was never altogether lost in England, and to-day we find in the heart of the Protestant Church taught openly the doctrine of seven Sacraments, intercessory prayer for the dead practised, confession preached and used, lights burned before the Altar where the Sacrament is reserved and before statues of Our Lady and the saints; things which, if we could conceive them happening in Ireland at all, we could do so only by putting into the picture the summoning of the police force, and all the consequent squalor of prosecutions in the law courts for "brawling" in the church.

Ireland's Distilled Protestantism

What came to Ireland from England was distilled Protestantism.

I am not speaking now so much of the *personnel* of the first Reformers in Ireland—that is, of the Bishops and clergy. Protestant historians themselves are loudest in their condemnation of them as a set of low, ignorant men, devoid of morality and principle.*

* An English Protestant journal complains that I made no attempt to prove the assertion. I did not give any proof or authorities, thinking that the facts were so notorious that no one was so utterly ignorant of Irish history as to require the authorities. Seeing, however, there is such ignorance, I mention a few of my authorities. Spenser, *History of Ireland*, p. 139, &c., says:—"The clergy are generally bad, licentious and most disordered . . . whatever disorders you see in the Established Church in England you may find here (in Ireland) and much more—namely, grosse simony,

I am speaking of the tone or spirit of the religious body which they did not find, but founded, in Ireland.

It was a camp in an enemy's land. The last outpost of the English garrison was the furthestmost limit of Protestantism. The Book of Common Prayer was ever in the shadow of the bayonet. Out beyond was the night, the rebels, the mere Irish, the Catholics.

For many a long year English and Protestant meant the same thing as do Irish and Catholic in London even to-day. As every English sentinel challenged every shadow, thinking it to be a soldier of The O'Neill, and as his later comrades saw in every bush one of Sarsfield's troopers, or a rebel of '98, or in

greedy covetousness, flesh incontinency, careless sloath . . . wherein it is great wonder to see the odds which is between the zeal of the popish priests and the *Ministers of the Gospel*, for they spare not to come out of Spain, from Rome and from Remes, by long toil and dangerous travelling hither, where they know certain peril of death awaiteth them and no reward or riches to be found, only to draw the people into the Church of Rome; whereas some of our idle ministers, having the livings of the county offered them, will neither for the same nor for any love of God be drawn forth from their warm nests." Again, in p. 132, Spenser says of the Irish Protestant clergy:—"They neither read Scriptures, nor preach to the people, nor administer Communion"—*Vide Spenser, ibid. passim.* Taylor, *Civil Wars*, V. I., p. 176, says:—"It is painful to dwell on the sins of omission and commission of the Church of England, of which the writer is a devoted member, but it is worse than useless to disguise the truth. Its establishment in Ireland exhibits the most flagrant instances of both positive and negative delinquency." Carte, a Protestant clergyman, in his *History of the Life of James Duke of Ormond*, says:—"The clergy of the Established Church were generally ignorant and unlearned and loose and irregular in their lives and conversations." If the English Protestant journal which asked for my authorities require more they will find references to the manner of men the first Bishops and Clergy of the Irish Protestant Church were, which I would not care to cite fully here, in Leland's *History*, Sydney's *Papers*, Letters of the Lord Deputy Wentworth, Letters of Bishop Bedell, all of whom were Protestants, and in many other sources. I was loth to give these authorities and to cite their testimony. As I said, the fact that the *personnel* of the first Protestant Bishops and Clergy were men, low, ignorant, devoid of morality and principle, was not the point I was insisting on. But when I was challenged to give my authorities I thought it better to do so.

more recent times a Fenian, so every Irish Protestant clergyman emulated in the spiritual world the zeal of the Cromwellian trooper and the Williamite soldier.

He scrutinised every word and doctrine, and with lanterns examined every nook and cranny of his church and its furniture to detect any shadow of a Cross, or trace of Holy Water, or ray of blessed candle, or any token of Popish practices, thinking the soldier in vain kept out the rebel Irish if he did not seal up the windows and close up the chinks of his church doors against the Catholic atmosphere which was hanging outside over the hills and valleys around.

In the arena of life, in the rush and turmoil of battle, men do not make distinctions and split hairs as they do in the lecture room or University hall. So as a body the Irish Protestant Church felt rather than knew that Protestantism and England's power were like temperature and the thermometer, they rose and fell together.

In our time, and, indeed, for the past hundred years, one phrase expressed all I have been saying—the Protestant Ascendancy.

I quoted the title of a pamphlet published over a century ago by the Protestant Bishop of Cloyne. In the preface the Bishop states that "the business of this little Tract is to prove that the Protestant Church is so essentially incorporated with the State that the subversion of one must necessarily overthrow the other." Further on he says:—"In this Kingdom of Ireland many peculiar circumstances render the support of the Established Church more essentially interesting to the landed gentlemen, the Protestant Government, and the British Empire."

Again he says:—"I need not tell the Protestant proprietor of land that the security of his title depends very much, if not entirely, on the Protestant Ascendancy, or that the preservation of that Ascendancy depends entirely on an indissoluble connection between the sister kingdoms. But let him consult his own reason how these great points are to be secured. Is it

by increasing the influence of Popery? The idea is revolting to common-sense."

But to understand the Protestant Ascendancy it is not necessary to go back to musty pamphlets of a hundred years ago.

We can see it in that page of our history which lies open before us and which we ourselves are writing. There are Catholics to-day who go down on their knees, I veritably believe, every morning and thank Providence they are allowed to look on the same sun, and breathe the same air, and move in the same social circle as Protestants. Nor is this confined to one class. Speak in any public assembly to-day in Ireland, describe any national movement, mention any of its leaders, and state he was a Protestant, and it will be greeted with thunders of applause. But mention that every one of Sarsfield's troopers were Catholics, that Sarsfield himself was drummed out of the British army because he would not become a Protestant, that ninety-nine per cent. of the rank and file who carried pikes in '98, and were Fenians in '48 and '66 were Catholics, and your remark will be received in dead silence.

The cicatrices made by the chains of a slave wear off very slowly.

That, then, to my mind is one of the main causes of the very Protestant character of the Protestant Church in Ireland. It has come down to our days well preserved, kept pure and staunch not by any innate power, but by a kind of moral plaster of Paris, or, perhaps, it would be more accurate to say plaster of London, or plaster of Dublin.

In our days that plaster is being gradually removed, and with the inevitable result as we shall see presently.

Why there was no Oxford Movement in Ireland

When we ask the question, why was there nothing in the life of Protestantism in Ireland to correspond to the Oxford movement in England, the true answer gives another cause of the very definite Protestant

character of the Protestant Church here in later days. Briefly the answer is that the circumstances which gave rise to that movement in England had no counterpart in Ireland.

For the past fifty years there has been in the English Protestant Church a general increasing feeling that it was time, now that the formularies of the Reformers were accepted and established as true, to ask why they were accepted as true. It was felt that it was not a very logical position to accept them as true merely because they were vouched for by an Act of Parliament.

This general state of theological tension only required a favourable set of circumstances to formulate itself into a theory. It required an intellectual centre, where there was a stir and movement of thought, and men fitted by their training and natural abilities to face deep and subtle questions. This was supplied by Oxford University, and such men as Newman, Manning, Keble, Pusey, Allies, and others.

Very soon the object of the various Church parties was not so much to make their views square with the Thirty-nine Articles and the various formularies of the Reformation, but rather to make these latter square with their doctrines.

Now, there was nothing of all this in the Irish Protestantism. There was no school of theological thought, for the simple reason that there was no school, there was no theology, and, worst of all, there was no thought.

. Even though Trinity were capable of playing the part of Oxford, which it was not, there was no general atmosphere of theological thinking. Before you can get an electric spark the air must be charged with electricity.

Irish Protestantism rested satisfied with the answer to the question—What are the doctrines and formularies of the first Reformers? all the while that English Protestantism was uneasily putting itself the more fundamental question—Why do I believe in them?

Irish Protestantism was in the position, and is so still, of a man who has learnt an auction bill by heart. English Protestantism wants to know why there was an auction at all.

The complete absence of theological thought, and, indeed, of any religious intellectual stir in the Irish Protestant Church, is made evident to us by the consideration of the four branches or sections into which the sister English Church, as Irish Protestants love to call it, but which the English sister does not at all relish—poor relations you know!—is divided—the Ritualist Party, the High Church, the Low Church, and the Broad Church.

Low Church—The Type of Irish Protestantism

Now, the Low Church contains the “*petite bourgeoisie*.”

As a body it is uneducated. Its religion is the good old British Constitution and the Bible, which the members accept as facts, behind which, as they put it, “there aint no getting.”* The bluff Yorkshire squire belongs to it who sits in his pew on Sunday because his father did so before him, and wonders when the parson will finish.

This type of Protestantism, this religious mind known as Low Church, is precisely the type to which Irish Protestantism belongs. This intellectual plebeianism is so keenly felt that young fellows

* The question of where the Bible was got—that is, the formation of the Canon—or how that which is called the Bible is known to be the Word of God, whilst sorely trying the English Protestant Church, is utterly ignored by the Irish Protestant Church. They do not seem to be aware of the existence of the difficulty. The philosophy of “where ignorance is bliss ’tis folly to be wise” seems to be fully grasped by them. When giving, some few years ago, a series of lectures entitled “Why I am a Catholic” a Protestant correspondent asked me did I not think that 2 Tim. iii 16—“all Scriptures inspired of God is profitable”—proved the inspiration of the Bible. It is questions like that which reveals the before-the-flood intellectual standing of Irish Protestantism.

coming up to the University of Oxford and Cambridge have been known to declare themselves Ritualists and Roman Catholics to pass off as intellectuals, though their good people down the country were as Low Church as could be.

Absence of Theological Training of Irish Protestant Clergy

This low religious intellectual level of Irish Protestantism and its result, its intense Protestant character, is due, as I have said, to historical causes and to the totally inadequate theological training of the Irish Protestant clergy.

It is no wonder that the question of the inadequacy of the Trinity Divinity School is coming home to the Protestant authorities.

At the last Dublin Synod a resolution was proposed and adopted that a committee be appointed to inquire into the extent and character of the instruction imparted to students in the Divinity School.

The Protestant note is apparent even in this endeavour to remedy what is the cause of its Protestantism. It appears the character of the instruction is objected to because the one text-book on the Prayer Book is written by a Rev. Mr. Frere, a Superior of a Community of Monks at Mirfield, who uses Mass vestments, altar lights, prays to the Blessed Virgin, and altogether is a very untrustworthy, misguided person.

The Dean of St. Patrick absolved him, pronouncing him a strong anti-Papist and a loyal member of the Church of England. I wonder would he regard him as a loyal member of the Church of Ireland if he obtained a curacy here in Dublin, used Mass vestments, and had lights and bells and other altar ornaments.

The curiously unscientific, untheological tone of the Irish Protestant Church does not astonish one who knows the deficient professional training the Irish Protestant clergy get in their Divinity School.

Maynooth-Trinity Divinity School. A Contrast

Compare the technical training given to a young candidate for Orders in Trinity College with that which a young Catholic Curate has gone through when he leaves Maynooth.

In two years the Candidate for Protestant Orders may complete his theological course. During those two years he attends lectures on various Scripture texts, Church History, various works such as Paley's *Evidences*, Liddon's *Lectures*.*

A systematic course of theology he does not get, for the simple reason there is no systematic course of Protestant theology. Each week he attends three Divinity Lectures, and as there are seven weeks in each of the three terms, this makes a total of sixty-three lectures per year. During his course he may live in lodgings in the city, gives what time he lists to study and relaxation. His ascetical and moral training he gets as best he may. He fulfils all justice by satisfying his Professor that he is a habitual communicant—a not very stringent condition. Of course he has plenty of opportunities of acquiring at afternoon tea parties and other social functions whatever culture may be needed for his after-life.

The young Catholic curate, before being allowed to enter on Divinity studies, has, first of all, to give two entire years to a course of Philosophy. Then he begins his four years of Divinity proper. During these four years he attends on an average twenty lectures a week.

In other words, the young aspirant to the priesthood in Maynooth attends as many lectures in one week as the candidate for Orders in Trinity does in one term.

At the end of his Divinity course the young Protes-

* During these two years the Candidate for Orders may also pursue his Arts Course. Whether as a fact he pursues his Arts Course during his Divinity Course, or his Divinity Course during his Arts Course depends on the individual student. One can easily imagine the remnants of study time being given to the Divinity Course.

tant divine has attended some one hundred and twenty-six professional lectures in all. The young Catholic curate will, at the end of his training, have attended at the very least some six hundred.

Add to this that the young Maynooth student is obliged to give on an average four to five hours a day to private study in the silence of his own room. He lives under the same roof as his professors, whom he can consult at any moment, and with whom he may discuss difficult points. Subtle aspects of doctrine and dry points of dispute leave the musty tomes of the great theologians, such as St. Thomas, De Lugo, Suarez, and others, and are hammered out and live again in discussions and debates carried on out in the country walks or in the recreation ground.

With the natural acumen and keen intellect which even our enemies tell us Providence has been lavish with when dealing with an Irish youth, at the end of six years of such training a man is turned out who can, at least, think.

Is it to be wondered at that the average Catholic priest in Ireland can afford to smile good humouredly at the theological efforts of the bishops and clergy of the Irish Protestant Church to which now and again the country is treated?

Some advantages he has had to forego, it is true, in his Maynooth training.

The young Levite has not had the advantage of attending afternoon tea-parties, and pleasant tennis parties and "At Homes." He has had to forego whatever ascetical or moral training might be had from going to the Gaiety, or Tivoli, or Empire, or Theatre Royal. Of these and others his Protestant *confrère* is at liberty to take full advantage. Instead, each year, after certain intervals, and at stated times, he has had retreats and days of recollection, during which he meditates on the eternal truth, considers well the sacredness of his calling, and asks God to lessen his unworthiness for the holy office, and to make him less weak to bear its fearful responsibilities.

Each morning he assists at the Holy Sacrifice. He has had every day a definite time allotted for meditation, vocal prayer, spiritual reading. There are spiritual directors, members of a religious body, who live in the College, to whom he may address himself on any difficulty or troubles which must inevitably arise at such a time.

No wonder again that Professor Huxley, having studied and gone into the details of the training given at Maynooth declared that he then understood what he often had noticed, that the members of his own clergy compared with the Catholic clergy were what militiamen were to the trained veterans of Napoleon's Old Guard.

This prepares me and lessens the shock—I can use no other word—caused by the amazing ignorance shown by clerical representatives of Protestantism in their recent public utterances.

Specimen of Irish Protestant Theological Learning

I doubt if it be possible to crowd into such a small space a greater number of so intricately woven errors of every kind, theological, logical, historical, than Dr. Crozier, the then Protestant Bishop of Down and Connor, managed to put into the discourse he proffered to a Belfast audience some weeks ago. Every phrase simply swarmed with mistakes. It was a work of genius in its own way. It would give ample matter for a second lecture merely to state them.

Will you allow me to quote two of them—two of the least glaring, but I select them as the least technical. “The ‘*Ne Temere*’ decree,” he says, “was based upon the discovery for the first time at the Council of Trent that marriage was a Sacrament.” Then he continues—“The whole edifice of the Roman doctrine was founded on a mistranslation of the Douay version of the Bible.”

Surely Dr. Crozier ought to have known that the Douay Bible was translated twenty years after the definition of the Council of Trent. He might as well

have said that the whole edifice of the Magna Charta was built on the result of the General Election of 1910.

Further, Dr. Crozier stated—"Before the Council of Trent, marriage had been a ceremony not requiring the intervention of a priest at all, and therefore it could not have been a Sacrament." Now either the learned prelate does not know how to write English, or those words mean that a ceremony at which there is not the intervention of a priest is no Sacrament.

In case Dr. Crozier wishes to know if this is true, let him ask some Catholic child in one of our poor slum schools who is being prepared for Confirmation. If he had done so he would not have spoken as he did.*

I have read only two criticisms of Dr. Crozier's words—one in a Protestant journal, the other in a Catholic magazine. I must say they are rather sharp, but still just criticisms. "I can scarcely believe," says Dr. Crozier's Catholic critic, "that the Bishop himself was deceived by his own reasoning, though he thought it sufficiently convincing for the Protestants of Belfast. . . . His audience, too, seemed quite satisfied with the information given them, recognising neither absurdity nor self-contradiction in the statements made to them."

* In my lecture I make two statements—(1) that Dr. Crozier asserted a priest was necessary for the conferring of a Sacrament (2) that if he had consulted a Catholic child in one of our slum schools preparing for Confirmation, the latter would have told the Protestant Primate that such an assertion was false.

With an endeavour, worthy of a better cause, to draw the fire off his Primate, a Protestant clergyman, a Canon and, I think, a Doctor of Divinity, tilts at these two assertions with the lance of, I use his own words, "most of the Protestant children preparing for that rite (Confirmation) know more about the Bible than almost any Roman Catholic Priest." Supposing the worthy Canon believed this, and supposing it were true, what follows? Does it follow that Dr. Crozier did not assert "that a ceremony not requiring the intervention of a priest was no Sacrament" or that no Catholic child of a slum school could inform the Protestant Primate that he was ignorant of Catholic doctrine since any lay man or woman may confer Baptism?

If this learned Doctor of Divinity were taking part in a theological disputation in Maynooth or any other Catholic theological school and met my twofold assertion with such a statement, I wonder would

The criticism of a member of his own communion is sharper, and was intended to be sharp. This critic says:—"It is with feelings of peculiar shame that we read the outpourings of the Right Reverend Prelate. . . . We are filled with shame on hearing of this rubbish poured from the lips of a Bishop of our Communion into the greedy ears of Belfast groundlings. . . . Poor Ireland!"

I do not see the point of the phrase, "Poor Ireland!" I would have understood "Poor Irish Protestantism!" or "Poor Belfast!"

After this discourse bluntly termed "rubbish" by his co-religionist, Dr. Crozier was made Primate of the Protestant Church of Ireland.

Presbyterian and Lay Protestant Theologians

At the same meeting the Moderator of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, the Rev. John H. Murphy, D.D., informed the audience that the Church of Rome "declares that a marriage celebrated years ago was valid up to a certain date, but now has become null and void," and the Rev. John H. Murphy is a Doctor of Divinity!

All this is the direct outcome of that want of serious he understand the amused look that would hover on the faces of the students. Of course, no one would dream of discussing with him the truth or falsehood of his statement no more than they would if he affirmed, that the moon was made of green cheese, or, that Queen Anne was dead. It might be whispered to him that the amusement was caused, not by the truth or falsehood of his assertion, but by his shockingly naïve *ignoratio elenchi*, and some kindly disposed student might explain to him afterwards, what that meant, or refer him to some elementary book on logic. Whilst another, desirous of extraneous information, might ask him what became of those erudite Protestant children. They evidently do not become Protestant clergymen, as the Protestant Bishop of Cashel declared in a pamphlet published some few weeks ago (see Afterword), that of the candidates for Protestant Orders "many were lamentably ignorant of the Holy Scriptures." Finally, another student with a talent for summing up the salient points of a situation might advert that it is a rather abnormal religious body in which the children are abnormally erudite and the clerics abnormally ignorant.

theological training so painfully evident in an examination of the system itself.

If these things happen in the green wood, what may we not expect when members of the Protestant laity make incursions into the region of Theology. I shall refer to just one such raid.

The Right Hon. J. H. Campbell, K.C., at the last protesting act of his Church, wishing to be more Protestant, and, I presume, more orthodox, than his Bishops and clergy, said he would protest against any Church legislation "which sought to override the law of the land."

The guiding star, then, the last norm of Mr. Campbell's religious life, is the law of the land. If tomorrow, by some strange revolution, dancing dervishes controlled the laws of the land, Mr. Campbell, as a law-abiding citizen, would be seen in the flowing robes of that body, at sunset or sunrise, in College Green or in the Hall of the Four Courts, when and wherever the law decided, executing that graceful dance the "Pas de Dervish," for the edification of his fellow-citizens. Any one seeking to prevent him would be seeking to override the laws of the land.

All the martyrs, all the patriots, who ever lived and died, Mr. Campbell would regard as wicked—as endeavouring to override the law of the land.

According to the law of the land Jesuits are outlaws. It is a pity; for perhaps Mr. Campbell has the same noble, patriotic sentiments as the Vicar of Bray expressed by him so beautifully—

"And I had been a Jesuit
But for the Revolution."

However, no one knows what recruit the future may bring to the Jesuit Order if Mr. Campbell allows his law-abiding propensities to influence him so far as to wait as the Vicar of Bray did

"Until the times do alter."

"And Popery comes in fashion."

Summing up

Thus I ascribe the pronounced Protestant character of the Irish Protestant Church to the fact, which was not so much its fault as its misfortune, that no stream of Catholic sentiment was ever in it as there was from the beginning in the Church of England.

Then that Protestantism in Ireland was always identified with the Protestant Ascendancy, and so studiously guarded against everything Catholic as being Irish; and, lastly, to the complete absence of any stir or movement in its world of theological thought, which in its turn is due to the defective training of the Protestant clergy and to the consequent obscurantism which permeates the entire religious thinking life of their Church.

I have met clergymen of the Protestant Church of Ireland who regarded Salmon's "Infallibility of the Church" as a theological work; just as I have met men who regard Bovril's advertisements as works of art.

I have said nothing of the constitution of the Irish Protestant Church. Yet it has its interest.

At the Disestablishment it took on a Presbyterian tone or hue which is becoming more pronounced every day.

The General Synod is its highest authority.*

"Go teach all nations." How Irish Protestants interpret it

In that Synod the vastly prevailing element is the lay element. It consists of the Archbishops and Bishops, 208 clergymen, and 416 laymen. If voting is by representation, the laity have evidently an enormous majority of votes. If voting takes place by orders, then an adverse lay vote blocks legislation or doctrinal definition of any kind.

* When I say authority I am speaking of the General Synod as a Catholic would speak of an Œcumenical Council. The Protestant view seems to be that there is no authority in the Protestant Church, at least in the Irish Protestant Church. (See Afterword.)

The Charter of the Church of Christ of old ran:—"Go, teach all nations"; but the charter of the Protestant Church in Ireland is:—"Go and be taught by one nation." Twenty-eight Bishops, 1,500 clergy, and 500,000 laymen make up the Protestant Church in Ireland; but if we call clergymen that portion of a Church which teaches, and laymen the members who are taught, then the constitution of this Church is a half million clergymen and one thousand five hundred laymen.

I have sympathy with an Irish Protestant clergyman who, after serious study of ancient Church history and of the Fathers, and, perhaps, after much earnest prayer, desires to introduce some view or ritual he has made up his mind to have been held in the beginning of Christ's Church. He finds all his efforts rendered vain, not by the teaching and ruling of an authority, which he can believe comes from Christ, but by the adverse vote of some excellent Irish Protestant laymen from the North of Ireland, or, indeed, from the South, who may be very good judges of the best method for fattening cattle, or for the raising of a good crop of turnips, but whose mental calibre and intellectual training would not fit them, for example, to help Dr. Crozier to understand that when the Church defines a doctrine she does not discover it then for the first time no more than when Dr. Crozier expressly states he has a toothache, does he discover it then for the first time.

Hence we find the Protestant laity in Ireland come to Church with their Bible and Prayer Book as with a tape measure to test everything, from the doctrine of the sermon down to the length of the parson's gown, the church furniture, and the number of lights used. It is not the gentleman in the pulpit who preaches to the gentleman in the pew, but the gentleman in the pew who tells the gentleman in the pulpit what to preach.

Some few months ago I entered a Protestant Church in the North of Ireland; the verger, in answer to my surprise that there was no cross, nor lights, nor

any religious emblem, said such things were against the plain sense of Scripture. When I asked him what would be done if the presiding clergyman thought otherwise and did put up a cross. "Oh!" he answered, "if he tried any of those capers on here we would soon put a stop to them."

I have left little time to discuss one very interesting aspect of the present state of Protestantism.

The Future of Protestantism in Ireland

What future do we see mirrored in that present state? What do the years that lie before us hold in store for that large body of our countrymen who are bound to us by so many ties of friendship, kinship and of work done for Ireland?

What will be the future of its Protestantism? It is strong yet in Ireland, though there is very distinct writing on the wall.

In England, Protestantism, for all practical purposes, is dead. It has been unable to stand the fretting against and contact with modern thought. I chanced to meet with some of the American delegates to the Pan-Religious Congress held last year in Berlin. They told me that in America the day of Protestantism was over. "Now," they said, "it is either Roman Catholicism or Christian Rationalism." I need not say that Christian Rationalism very soon becomes Rationalism without the Christian.

Some few numbers back I read in the official organ of the Irish Protestant Church an article gloating over the trials through which the Catholic Church is passing in Italy, Spain and Portugal. So does a drowning man drag down with him everything he can clutch. In these countries it is either Catholicism or Atheistic Rationalism. The antagonism between good and evil will always work itself out to that in the end, but no one ever dreams of Protestantism now as affording an intellectual foothold.

It is not easy to express briefly, as I must do, my views of the future of Protestantism.

No thought is being brought home to us more insistingly by modern science, especially by what is true in the great Theory of Evolution, than the close relation there is between Truth and Life. The full significance of Christ's words—"I am the Truth and the Life," is being borne in on us more fully every day with the progress of thought.

In this strange world of ours everything moves. Whether the old Greek philosopher saw the full meaning of his philosophic axiom—*Panta rei*—all things flow—or not, it is true.

The Movement of the Living

The movement of what is true is the movement of life, the movement of what is false is the movement of death. What is true lives, grows, adapts itself to its surroundings, not mechanically, but in virtue of its organism. Consequently, in the midst of all this diversity it never loses its individuality. Its structure, its plan, the idea realised in it ever remains the same. It takes up what is outside, examines it, tests it, and then makes it its own or drives it forth. Let any part become infected, it never ceases till it expels the poison, but all the while it remains itself.

Now such has been the life of the Catholic Church.

The Movement of the Dead

What is not true moves, but with the movement peculiar to the dead. A false system, like a false or unnatural species, when freed from artificial surroundings at once shows a two-fold tendency, a tendency to return to the natural type of which it was a degenerate specimen, or else to fall away more and more and to split up into its elements which will be food for other systems.

For the last three hundred years Irish Protestantism has been in, so to say, spirits of wine, embalmed and wrapped in the swathing cloths of a Protestant Ascendancy. These are being taken off and already

the two-fold tendency to return to the original type and to fall entirely to pieces is revealing itself.

We see already, very faintly, of course, a dawning of Catholicism.* We see it in the feverish anxiety, at least, on the part of some Irish Protestants, to be called Catholics †; we see it in the Catholic rites and practices which are filtering in slowly, but surely, not only in some Dublin churches, but in the country and in Protestant Ulster, and we see it in the Divinity School of Trinity College, where the tone is so Ritualistic as to excite the attention and even alarm of their more Protestant Churchmen.

Then there is the other tendency which has made itself so noticeable of late years, the tendency towards Presbyterianism, Non-Sacerdotalism, and what in England would be called the tenets of Protestant Liberalism and of the Broad Church Party.

At the late Protestant Synod the Presbyterian Moderator was introduced, and spoke of union with his Protestant brethren. The Protestant Archbishop

* Presiding at the Church of Ireland Conference last October the Protestant Bishop of Down regarded the fact that now "the Orange bandmen on the 12th of July silence the flute and drum whilst marching past the Roman (?) Hospital," where are the sick and dying, as "a tendency to a friendly union with Catholicism." I would rather regard such a fact as one of the first signs that the Orangemen of the North were leaving the night of barbarism and at last giving some hope of being civilised.

† In reference to the claim put forward by some Protestants to the title Catholic, a correspondence took place in the columns of some Dublin newspaper after my lecture. Various references were made to the historical use of the title "Catholic." The fundamental reason why we Catholics do not give and may not give the title Catholic to Protestants is this:—We are bound to believe that the one sole true Church founded by Christ is our Church. That is our belief, which we are bound to hold as long as we are members of that Church. A Catholic is a member of the one sole true Church founded by Christ. Therefore we are not free to give that title to any one outside our Church as long as we mean by Catholic what I have stated. If a Protestant chooses to call himself a Catholic, he is free to do so just as a Frenchman is free if he chooses to call himself an Englishman or a Japanese, but that does not make him the one or the other. There is one way only for a Protestant to lay a just claim to the title Catholic, and that is by becoming one.

of Dublin replied in a friendly fashion, and said of course there were difficulties in the way, but the proposals would be considered. The whole scene reminded one very much of a nervous young man asking for the hand of the maiden of his choice, and being told his proposals would receive serious consideration.

The idea was encouraged that Presbyterian ministers should be invited to preach to Protestant congregations in Protestant churches, and the compliment returned by the Presbyterians. One Bishop in the North of Ireland has distinctly recommended his clergy to adopt "the interchange of pulpits," as it is called.

I do not refer to this now as a course that seems supremely absurd to us Catholics, as, indeed, it does to some Protestants.

One, writing to the *Church of Ireland Gazette*, deprecates the so-called union. Presbyterians, he argues, maintain two Orders; Protestants insist on three, and any one who would reconcile these two doctrines, he suggests, the sooner he becomes a Jesuit the better. Well, I have been a Jesuit now for twenty-five years, and I do not think that step would make his task easier.

I refer to those events as indicative of that other tendency of Protestantism in Ireland towards breaking up into its elemental parts. Presbyterianism, Congregationalism, Individualism, religious Liberalism, Rationalism, are the resting stages to the final stage of Agnosticism.

In other countries the transition is made at once from Catholicism to Agnosticism. Here it takes place gradually, but none the less surely.

Will that fissure in the Protestant Church in Ireland, which is just revealing itself, broaden quickly? Will the two little streamlets to Catholicism and to Agnosticism soon become rivers, as they are in England? It is hard to tell.

Much will depend on the religious intellectual advancement of Protestants in Ireland, and especially on the efficient theological and historical attainments of their clergy.

**Intellectual Advance—the only hope, the fatal
danger of Irish Protestantism**

Protestantism has one thing, and one thing only, to fear from Home Rule in Ireland. It is if the Parliament in College Green were to give a large money grant to the Divinity School of Trinity College, and insist it should be expended in raising the standard of theological learning there so as to make it in some way approach that of Maynooth College.

If that were done, with the quick parts Providence has been so generous with, in dealing with us Irish, and with the removal of all those prejudices which kept Catholic and Protestant apart in the past more effectively than the Boyne, a half a century, in my opinion, would suffice to open up a new chapter of Irish history in the writing of which Irish Protestantism would have no part.

When that time comes there will be one Catholic Church, owning as its visible head the Vicar of Christ, ready then, as it is to-day, to receive back as a mother those who should have been her children, but, through no fault of their own, were not; for whom she will have a very tender regard as being the children of those who in the past died for her Faith and by their martyr blood made holy the hills of Ireland.

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